

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: STRAITS DEBATE/COMMITTEE II

REF: GENEVA 3409

EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED REFTEL AND REGRETS CANADIAN TACTICS
THOUGH WE NOT PARTICULARLY SURPRISED. WE NOTE SEVERAL
FACTORS IMPORTANT TO ANALYSIS OF CANADIAN POSITION:

1. AS USDEL LOS AWARE, CANADA OFTEN ATTACHES GREAT
IMPORTANCE TO BILATERAL PROBLEMS WHICH IN US EYES ARE
OFTEN OF MINOR SIGNIFICANCE, AT LEAST IN WORLD-WIDE
CONTEXT. THIS TO US, HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE
REPRESENTS A PROBLEM CONCERNING ONE STATE AND ONE
COUNTRY, AND OBVIOUSLY OUR INTERESTS INVOLVE MANY
STATES IN MANY AREAS. TO THE CANADIANS, HOWEVER,
HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE IS ONE OF THREE MOST IMPORTANT
STATES IN THE WORLD. THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR
NORTHWEST PASSAGE. WHEN ON BILATERAL LEVEL US RE-
JECTED CANADIAN POSITION RE EASTPORT REFINERY, RED
FLAG MAY HAVE GONE UP, WITH RESULT THAT CANADA FELT
IT HAD TO MAKE CLEAR THAT IT HAD ITS OWN VIEWS ABOUT
HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE WHICH IT WAS NOT ABOUT TO GIVE
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UP IN DEFERENCE TO US INTERESTS.

2. WITH PUBLICLY ADVERTISED "ABANDONMENT" OF CANADIAN-US "SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP," US CAN EXPECT CANADA TO FOLLOW MORE INDEPENDENT LINE. EMBASSY

WOULD SUGGEST THAT US VIEWS DO NOT ALWAYS CARRY AS MUCH WEIGHT AS FORMERLY IN CANADIAN COUNCILS WHEN ITEM AT ISSUE INVOLVES CANADIAN NATIONAL INTERESTS. CANADA WILL NO LONGER SEMI-AUTOMATICALLY ADAPT ITS POSITION TO THAT OF THE US IF IT THINKS IT MAY HAVE MORE TO GAIN BY OPPOSING US OR BY SIDING WITH OTHER ELEMENTS.

3. EMBASSY OBVIOUSLY NOT IN BEST POSITION TO KNOW ABOUT SHUCH MATTERS, BUT CONCEIVABLY CANADIAN POSITIONS/ ATTITUDES MAY IN PART HAVE BEEN PRICE CANADA BELIEVED IT HAD TO PAY TO OBTAIN THIRD-COUNTRY BACKING FOR CANADIAN CONTINENTAL SHELF IDEAS OR SOME OTHER TOPIC OF IMPORTANCE TO CANADA.

4. WHILE SUPPORT OF NATO REMAINS IMPORTANT PART OF CANADIAN POLICY, EMBASSY NOTES THAT CANADA UNDER TRUDEAU HAS OBVIOUSLY HAD MIXED EMOTIONS ABOUT RELATIONSHIP. IT HAS REDUCED ITS MILITARY COMMITMENT, THEN FOUND THAT IT COULD NOT REDUCE MUCH IF ANY FURTHER IF IT WANTED TO BE HEARD IN EUROPEAN COUNCILS. EUROPEANS HAVE REMAINED COOL TO CANADIAN DESIRES FOR CLOSER ECONOMIC RELATILNSHIPS, AND REGARD CANADA PRIMARILY AS SOURCE FOR RAW MATERIALS. SO PERHAPS CANADIAN THINK THAT IN FORA SUCH AS LOS, NATO SOLIDARITY NOT ALL THAT IMPORTANT, AND AMBASSADOR BEESLEY IS UNGUIDED MISSILE WHOSE LAST CONSIDERATION WOULD BE NATO SOLIDARITY.

5. PERSONALITY OF BEESLEY IS AN IMPORTANT, POSSIBLY CRUCIAL, FACTOR. EMBASSY NOTES FROM REFTEL THAT US DEL WAS "PARTICUARLY TROUBLED BY PROCEDURE USED BY CANADIAN DEL IN RAISING STRAITS ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THEM." EMBASSY HAS SELDOM KNOWN BEESLEY TO WORRY ABOUT PROCEDURES OR METHODS OF ADVANCING GOC INTERESTS, HOWEVER PAINFUL TO USG. DCM RECALLS BEESLEY'S REMARK TO HIM AFTER GOC'S UNILATERAL EXTENSIONS OF JURISDICTION SEA-
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WARD IN 1970 WHEN HE SAID (KRISHNA MENON-WISE) "THE ONLY WAY TO MOVE YOU FELLOWS IS TO KICK YOU HARD IN THE TAIL." HE THEN TRIED TO EXPLAIN THAT THE KICK WAS REALLY A CARESS, SINCE IT HELPED STIMULATE CUMBERSOME USG BUREAUCRACY IN RIGHT (BEESLEY) DIRECTION. HENCE, REFTEL PHRASE IS WELL PUT THAT "LACK OF CO-OPERATION WITH NATO ALLIES ON STRAITS AND OTHER LOS ISSUES SOMETIMES SEEMS TO GO BEYOND SUBSTANCE."

BEESLEY RELISHES CAUSING TROUBLE AND HAS NOT ONLY GOTTER AWAY WITH IT SINCE 1970, BUT BUILT CREDIT WITH GOC MANDARINS (AND PRESS AND PUBLIC) TO EXTENT THAT HE HAS FAIRLY FREE HAND WITH BOTH SUBSTANCE GOC POSITIONS AND NEGOTIATING TACTICS. HE WILL PRESS HIS INTERESTS ALMOST WITHOUT LIMIT, AND CONSIDERATIONS OF ALLIED SOLIDARITY OR US-CANADIAN RELATIONS WEIGH LITTLE.

6. DIFFICULTY IN KNOWING HOW US SHOULD REACT BEGINS WITH KEEN SUPPORT BEESLEY HAS FROM TRUDEAU AND PRIME MINISTER'S CLOSEST FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER, IVAN HEAD, HIMSELF AN EXPORT ON INTERNATIONAL LAW (THESIS ON THE ARCTIC) AND AS INCORRIGIBLY NATIONALIST AS BEESLEY.

7. LINKAGE MIGHT BE ATTEMPTED WITH OTHER NATO ALLIES, ASSUMING THEY IN FACT FEEL AS STRONGLY AS US REGARDING STRAITS ISSUE. IF THEY DO, PERHAPS THEY MIGHT BE WILLING REFER AT LEAST OBLIQUELY TO CANADIAN DESIRES FOR "CONTRACTUAL LINK WITH EEC." EUROPEAN TRADING PARTNERS OF CANADA MIGHT BE ABLE SWAY CANADIAN JUDGMENT SINCE THEY HAVE SOMETHING CANADA WANTS VERY BADLY.

8. APPROACH AT ORDINARY OR EVEN EXTRAORDINARY LEVELS IN EXTAFF UNLIKELY BE AVAILAING. IF LANGUAGE QUOTED IN PARA 6 REFTEL IS BEST TEXT USDEL HAS TO MARKET, EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO PUSH IT WITH HEAD AND OTHERS. THIS TEXT WOULD SEEM CLEAR WAY FOR FREE PASSAGE THROUGH ANDOVER NORTHWEST PASSAGE AND HEAD HARBOR PASSAGE, SINCE EMBASSY UNAWARE ANY GOOD CANADIAN CASE THEIR WATERS WERE INTERNAL BEFORE 1958. MORE EXPLICIT GUIDANCE REQUESTED. WE DOUBT EFFICACY OF ANY TACTICS WITH BEESLEY-LED CANADIAN DELEGATION UNLESS THEY ARE BASED ON COLD APPLIATION OF LEVERAGE DESIGNED TO

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THWART CANADIAN PURPOSES. ONE THING TO KEEP IN MIND IS THAT BEESLEY IS AWARE THAT HIS FREE HAND IN DEVELOPING HIS DELEGATION'S TACTICS MAKES IT VERY NECESSARY THAT HE BRING HOME THE BACON. IF WE HAVE LEVERAGE, IT WILL HAVE TO BE APPLIED IN UNSENTIMENTAL MANNER TO BE EFFECTIVE. PORTER

NOTE BY OC/T: EXDIS ADDED PER MR JOHNSON, S/S-O.

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